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TAGS: PREL PHUM MG CH  
SUBJECT: Mongolia Braces for Dalai Lama Arrival, China's Reaction

Ref: Ulaanbaatar 634 and previous

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¶1. (SBU) The President's Foreign Policy Advisor confirmed to the Embassy on August 21 that the Dalai Lama would arrive later in the day. (Note: The direct flight to Ulaanbaatar from Tokyo arrives at 10:00 PM.) The Dalai Lama will visit at the invitation of the head lama of Gandan Monastery, the leading Tibetan Buddhist monastery in Mongolia. However, the Dalai Lama will reportedly stay at Ikh Tenger, the Mongolian leadership compound. On August 23, President Enkhbayar, in his capacity as the chairman of the Mongolian Buddhist Association, will return to Ulaanbaatar from leave to meet with him.

The Indian ambassador will host a small reception for the Dalai Lama on August 22, which the Ambassador will attend.

¶2. (SBU) Embassy was told by sources that the PRC has protested the Dalai Lama's visit. Late last week, the PRC Vice Foreign Minister called in the Mongolia ambassador to China. China's ambassador to Mongolia is out of country on leave until August 25, but the Chinese charge called on MFA officials and asked to speak with the President. The President, who is on a timely vacation in a remote northern province, is not taking any calls. Efforts may be continuing -- as EP Chief went by MFA on Monday afternoon, he noted the Chinese charge's vehicle departing.

SLUTZ